

# HIGHDEF.ORG

Autumn 2001

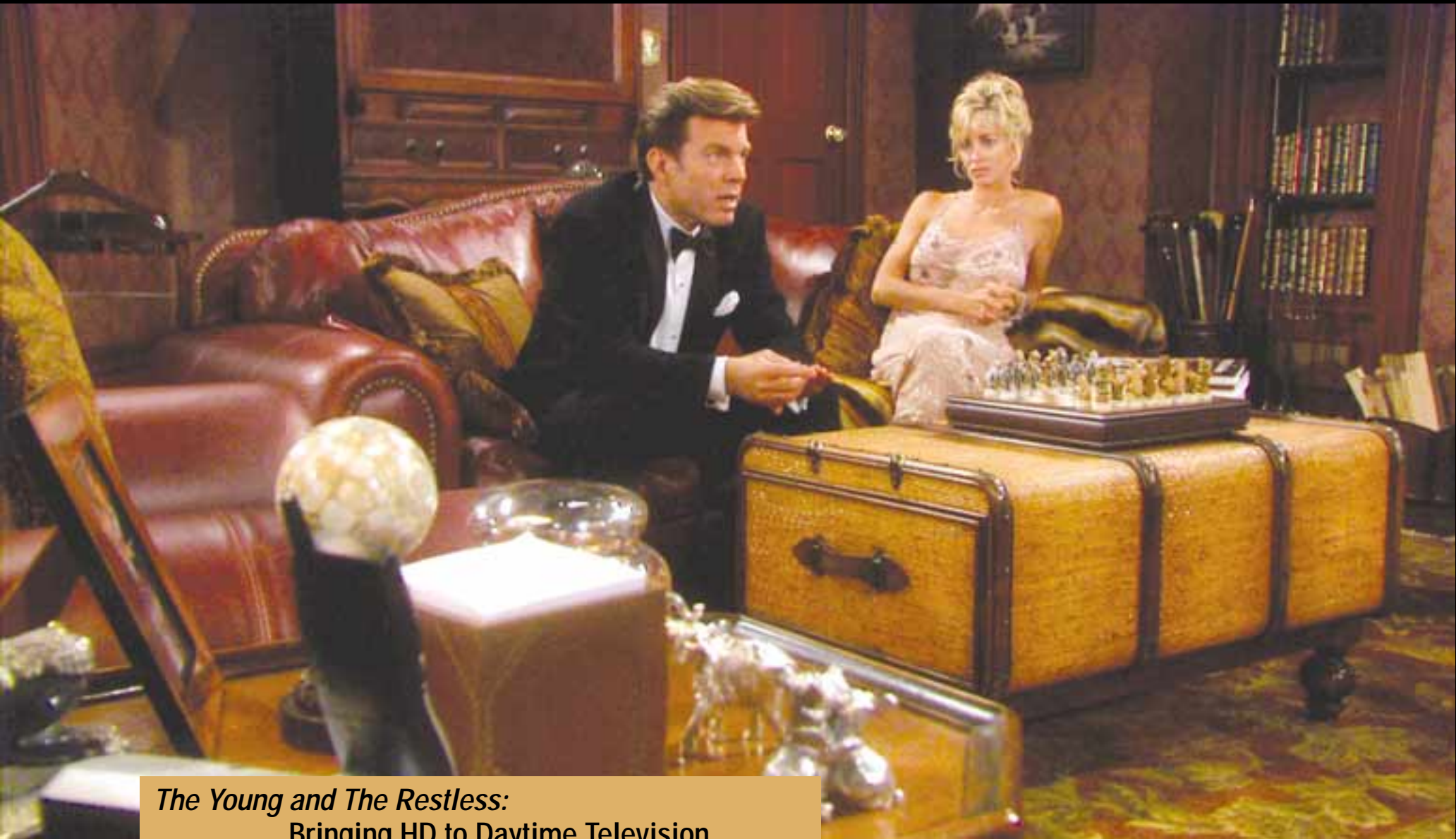
IN THIS ISSUE

## *Suspended Animation*

John Hancock directs his first 24P HD feature

## *New Suit is fashioned in 24P HD*

M. David Mullen gives us a look at shooting in HD



*The Young and The Restless:*  
Bringing HD to Daytime Television



▶ HDW-F900 HDCAM 24P CineAlta™  
High Definition camcorder.  
The digital movie camera.\*



▶ DVW-790WS Digital  
Betacam® camcorder.  
The gold standard  
in Widescreen  
Standard Definition.



▶ DSR-500WS DVCAM camcorder.  
Affordable, light and  
fast on its feet.



SONY

"The familiar look and feel of  
motion picture film are here."

— GEORGE LUCAS

If you want to see a movie pro get excited, ask George Lucas, Chuck Barbee, or Mike Figgis about Sony Digital Electronic Cinematography. Each is using Sony tools to explore new creative possibilities.

"*Star Wars: Episode II* is our last giant step toward Digital Cinema," says George Lucas, describing his decision to shoot principal photography with Panavision-modified Sony HDCAM® 24P camcorders. "The familiar look and feel of motion picture film are present in this digital 24P system. And the picture quality between the two is indistinguishable on the large screen."

*Warm Blooded Killers* is a dark comedy shot on Digital Betacam® tape and printed to 35mm. "I truly believe digital is the

future," says Chuck Barbee, the director of photography. "The whole process was surprisingly good. And compared to film, raw tape stock costs next to nothing. This really lowers the cost of getting it in the can, which means that more projects can get made."

Mike Figgis challenges our most basic conventions of narrative in *Timecode*, the movie that follows four simultaneous storylines in four unbroken 93-minute takes. The production demonstrates the quality (not to mention the recording time) of Sony DVCAM acquisition. Says Figgis, "There's no way we could have done this with traditional techniques."

We shot *Star Wars: Episode II* in 61 days in 5 countries in the rain and desert heat averaging 36 setups per day without a single camera problem. We have found the picture quality of the 24P Digital HD system to be indistinguishable from film.

— George Lucas and  
Rick McCallum

Can Sony Digital Electronic Cinematography really be all that they say? Some of the proof is already on display at a theater near you.

1-800-472-SONY ext. DCH  
[www.sony.com/professional](http://www.sony.com/professional)

# CINEMATOGRAPHERS GET BEHIND CANON'S HD-EC LENSES.

## FROM MOTION PICTURES TO TELEVISION, CANON GETS HIGH RATINGS.

From the newest Hollywood productions, to television's *Earth: Final Conflict*, Canon's HD-EC lenses have become the standard for digital cinematography. Directors agree that shooting with HD-EC lenses, which have been optimized for EC cameras, offers remarkable imagery. And those who hesitate because "it's video" are amazed when they see the results.



**HJ18X7.8B KLL-SC**

introduced to compliment the line of prime lenses, incorporate Canon's award-winning optics and years of experience with film and video lenses.

These include zoom, focus and iris rings engraved with large luminous scales and T-stop measurements. Distance scales are marked from the CCD plane. The 0.8 modulus gears on the zoom, focus and iris rings provide compatibility with studio follow focus rigs, manual fluid zoom drives and motorized control systems.

For digital cinematography at its highest level, take a look into Canon's HD-EC lenses.

The ideal companion for 24fps and other B-4 mounted cameras, Canon's HJ9X5.5B KLL-SC (5.5-50mm T2.3 macro zoom) and HJ18X7.8B KLL-SC (7.8-144mm T2.5 macro zoom) are the HD-EC lenses cinematographers request. These two film-style lenses,



**HD-EC**

*Photo taken on the set of *Earth: Final Conflict*, a series that switched from film to digital cinematography.*

*Maximize Your Camera's Performance.*

*For more info: Call 1-800-321-HDTV  
(In Canada: 905-795-2012)  
<http://www.canonbroadcast.com>*

**Canon** KNOW HOW™

Canon and Canon Know How are trademarks of Canon Inc. ©2001 Canon USA, Inc.

# Contents

HighDef.Org

Autumn 2001



- 6 **The Young and The Restless: Bringing HD to Daytime Television**  
CBS and Columbia Tri-Star join forces to produce the first daytime show in HD.  
*by Debra Kaufman*



- 11 **First Breath**  
Paul Gilman utilizes High Definition cameras in his travels to exotic places to communicate through music with whales and dolphins.  
*by Valerie Gill*



- 12 **Suspended Animation**  
An interview with John Hancock about his experiences shooting his full-length feature on Sony's 24P HD.  
*by David W. Thompson*



- 14 **Fashioning a New Suit in 24P HD**  
M. David Mullen, Director of Photography for Francois Velle's film *New Suit* talks about the choices he made in shooting with the 24P HD format.  
*by M. David Mullen*



- 16 **Paradise for Predators: The Sharks of Palau**  
John McKenney, Clint Hemsall, and Jody Helzer spend three weeks in a quest to be among the first to film sharks on HDTV.  
*by Jody Helzer and Jean Horton Gamer*



- 17 **Iwerks® Creates Daytona HD Experience**  
Buckle up for this action-packed, four-minute film, *Daytona Dream Laps* projected in HD for Iwerks TurboRide®, a simulation theater experience for Daytona USA.  
*by Christina Frueh*



- 18 **Crazy Jones**  
Keith Coene, producer and Brian J. Reynolds, Director of Photography work with Director Joe Aaron on his first feature film.  
*by Joe Aaron*



- 19 **Investigative Reports with Bill Kurtis: Druglord**  
In this one-hour, special episode of Investigative Reports, anchor Bill Kurtis travels to Southeast Asia to meet a reforming druglord, and then on to Thailand.  
*by Jon Siskel*



- 20 **Nonfiction Spots Pioneers 24P Ad Campaign**  
Ford's *Blue Oval* spot campaign, produced by Nonfiction Spots in California, is the advertising industry's first national spot campaign shot in the 24P HD format.  
*by William Conner*



- 22 **The New Easter Bunny**  
Larry Zetlin has completed another HD documentary called *The Men Who Killed The Easter Bunny*. This true-life story is about the endangered Bilby of Australia  
*by Bill Dugan*

---

## 5 HD Production News

HighDef.Org

Volume 3, Issue 4  
A Publication of  
**AMERICAN PRESS SERVICES**  
Office: 2247 Fifteenth Avenue West  
Seattle, WA 98119  
(206)282-1776 FAX: (206)282-3535  
e-mail: david@apsnw.com

**Publisher:** American Press Services  
**Editor:** David W. Thompson  
**Design/Layout:** Gina Griffin Hanzsek  
**Contributing Writers:** Joe Aaron,  
William Conner, Bill Dugan, Valerie Gill,  
Debra Kaufman, M. David Mullen, Jon  
Siskel, David W. Thompson

**Photos:** HighDef still grabs  
**Display Advertising:** Call David W.  
Thompson at HighDef.Org –  
1-888-282-1776 for a current rate  
card. Deadline for advertising  
confirmations and mechanicals is 15  
days prior to publication date.

**Distribution:** HighDef.Org is distributed  
to professionals in all areas of video and  
film production nationally.

**Cover:** HighDef still grab from *The  
Young and The Restless*. Peter  
Bergman plays *Jack Abbott* and Eileen  
Davidson plays *Ashley Abbott Carlton*.

## ABC HD Prime Time Broadcasts

On September 7, ABC disclosed plans to offer most of its prime-time programs this season in the High Definition format. This is a significant step adding several hours of programming to the CBS lineup and NBC's "Tonight Show." Alex Wallau, president of the ABC television network, said that the broadcasts will provide a test of whether the technology will appeal to viewers. He said, "This year will be a determining one in the marketplace, as to whether the experience is worth the dollars." The Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) said, "This is a major step forward for the transition to digital television as viewers will have even more great programs to watch in HDTV."

## HDNet Debuts All High Definition Network

HDNet debuted in September the world's only all-High Definition national television network. Founded by Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban and Philip Garvin, HDNet plans to have a 16 hour-per-day, seven day-per-week schedule of sports and entertainment programming, all in HD. Through agreements with Major League Baseball, the National Hockey League, the U.S. Olympic Committee and the National Lacrosse League, HDNet will offer the largest selection of sports programming available in High Definition. In addition to sports, HDNet will feature a variety of live and taped special events, concerts, documentaries, music videos and movies.

## High Definition Goes Country

Nashville based production company, The Collective, completed production of an HD documentary showcasing the art of country music around the world. The project was shot in the U.S., Australia and South America. It was edited at Nashville's Ground Zero. The finished piece will be featured at the new Country Music Hall of Fame projected in HD.

## WHDT, Nation's First HDTV-Only Station

This summer WHDT-TV (West Palm Beach, FL) became the nation's first HDTV-only station. The station chose Panasonic D-5 as their house tape format. WHDT has a sister production company, Digital Kinofilm which produces in the 720P HD format. Both are owned by Marksteiner AG of Germany.

## CBS, Samsung and Sears Form HD Partnership

Samsung Electronics Corp., Sears, Roebuck and Company and CBS Television announced a partnership that will allow fans to watch a full season of college football games in High Definition. Samsung and Sears will produce an "HDTV Game Day" promotion in which Sears full-line stores across the U.S. will show a leading game each week during the regular season on a Samsung HDTV. The in-store broadcasts will be shown in a setting that will allow consumers to compare the experience of an HDTV broadcast with that of regular TV.

## Grover: Digital Imaging Technician with One on One for UPN

Derek Grover of Ultimate Definition continues his track record of working on top 24P productions. After completing *That's My Bush*, in HD, Derek is now the "Digital Imaging Technician" (a designation of Local 600 of the Cinematographers Guild) on *One on One*, a sitcom being produced by Paramount for UPN. The 24P HD production uses four cameras in a film style format. The sitcom has a 13 episode order. Derek is working with producers Craig Wyrich-Solari and Shari Tavey.

## REBA Being Produced in 24P HD

*REBA*, a new television series starring Reba McEntire is being produced in 24P High Definition. The program is a multi-camera in-studio situation comedy which will be on the WB this fall. It is being produced by 20th Century Fox TV and Acme Productions. Plus8 is supplying the cameras for the series. Don Morgan, the Director of Photography, uses four cameras in a controlled lighting situation on stage. The producer, Jason Shubb, says, "We are extremely pleased with the results."

## 24fps Shows Off HD on the Web

24fps productions offers viewers the opportunity to see how 24P High Definition looks over the web. On their web site [www.24fpsProductions.com](http://www.24fpsProductions.com) they show their project *First Time Shark Dive*, which follows a woman going on her first shark feeding dive in the Bahamas. The web site also has valuable information about the 24P HD format.

## M. David Mullen shoots *Jackpot* in 24P

Michael and Mark Polish, known for their enigmatic 1999 feature *Twin Falls Idaho*, teamed up with cinematographer M. David Mullen to shoot *Jackpot*, a story about the misadventures of Sonny Holiday (John Gries), a would-be country-western singer who travels across the U.S. with his manager (Garrett Morris), trying to score fame and fortune by competing in karaoke singing contests. After some initial discussion, the production team opted to shoot in 24P, and according to Mullen, the results are nothing short of breathtaking.

## Action Sports Cable Network in HD

Technology pioneer Paul Allen, who co-founded Microsoft and owns the Portland Trailblazers and Seattle Seahawks has launched ASCN, a High Definition cable TV regional sports channel. The channel will be programmed 24 hours a day and will include 25 to 30 Trailblazer games, Seahawks preseason games and Portland Fire WNBA games as well as coach shows.

## Cosmic Africa shot in HD

*Cosmic Africa*, an American co-production with Cosmos Studios and Aland Pictures, is filming all over the continent of Africa this year, including Egypt, Mali, Namibia, Kenya and South Africa. It is described as "an extraordinary journey into the ancient continent's forgotten astronomical past, unveiling the deep connection humans have with the cosmos. The program is using Sony's HDW-700 HDCAM camcorder from Plus8.

## JBTV Films *Blink 182* in High Definition

JBTV director Jerry Bryant, award winning film director has expanded from film to High Definition. His latest project, a six-camera shoot of the *Blink 182* and *New Found Glory* Rockumentary was produced in HD for MCA and MTV. JBTV specializes in entertainment production, having filmed over 2,500 concerts in the past fifteen years.

### Correction

In our article on "Sony and A.C. Inc. Team Up in Nashville," it was incorrectly stated that the piece was shot in 1035. It was in fact shot at 1080/59.94 and mastered in the same format.

# The Young and The Restless: Bringing HD to Daytime Television

by Debra Kaufman

**B**eginning on June 27, *The Young and the Restless*, the long-running drama on CBS, became the first daily HD program to air on daytime television. This daytime drama has been a consistent standout for its meticulous attention to beautiful sets, props, costumes, and of course, actors. So when Barry Zegel, CBS vice president of West Coast Technical Operations and Engineering, got the word that the network had some underwriting funds targeted at putting a daytime project in High Definition, he didn't have to move over the possibilities for long.

"I immediately thought of *The Young and the Restless*," Zegel recounts. "It's an hour program, so that's a lot of bang for the buck to get an hour of HD on the air during the daytime. Plus, it's such a great looking show, it seemed like a natural."



Peter Bergman and Eileen Davidson with the new HDTV camera on the set of *The Young and the Restless* seen daily on the CBS Television Network (check local listings for time)

Zegel and his CBS colleagues approached senior management at Columbia Tri-Star, the owner of *The Young and the Restless*, proposing a partnership to produce the show in HD.

"We said we wanted to do this collectively," remembers Zegel. "We know there'll be some hiccups along the way, but we think it'll be a great thing for the show and CBS."

Edward Scott, executive producer of *The Young and the Restless* for 25 years and a four-time Emmy Award winner, says his response to being invited to produce the first daytime show in HD was enthusiastic. "I said absolutely!" he remembers. "But I also said we had to try it out first."

For everyone involved in producing *The Young and the Restless* in HD, the stakes were high. The show's producers were excited about upping the show's already high production values. For CBS, it was a coup to be first to put an HD drama on daytime. For the underwriters, a daytime HD program would be ideal for showcasing the HDTV receivers in consumer electronics stores during peak shopping hours.

But there's always a risk in change and, to make the transition as smooth as possible, the team tested equipment before plunging into production.

"HD cameras were installed temporarily for testing, doing isolated records, letting the camera people see how they could adapt, looking at depth of field...all the things you worry about in a conversion," says Zegel. "We wanted a comfort level all around, with make-up, lighting, actors. We also wanted to make sure we weren't

compromising standard definition which, after all, is still how most people will view the show."

The final equipment configuration consists of Ikegami HDK-79 cameras, recording in 1080i to Panasonic D-5 decks. The possibility of shooting the show in 24P did come up, says Zegel, but since the program would have to be aired in 1080i, acquiring in that HD format was "a natural fit." Staying in 1080i also meant that the production could utilize CBS's existing HD gear. The only device that was added for the show was a Sony HDS-7150 switcher, in the control room, for the line switch.

*The Young and the Restless* has always been lit with very little light, in the range of 12 to 14 foot candles, which both makes the actors more comfortable and enables the camera crew greater latitude with depth of field. The hope was to be able to continue to maintain that look in the show's HD version.

"Luckily, the sensitivity of the new cameras allowed us to continue with those low light levels," says Zegel, who reports that lighting for HD proved to be a non-issue.

Another concern was that HD's increased resolution would reveal too much, especially on the actors' faces. Though there was a budget set aside for making changes to the set, repairs were minimal and the minor changes involved extending the set for the 16:9 aspect ratio. Likewise, the actors were pleasantly surprised when they saw the first takes.

"The increase in resolution should not be a concern

*Continued on page 8...*



HD

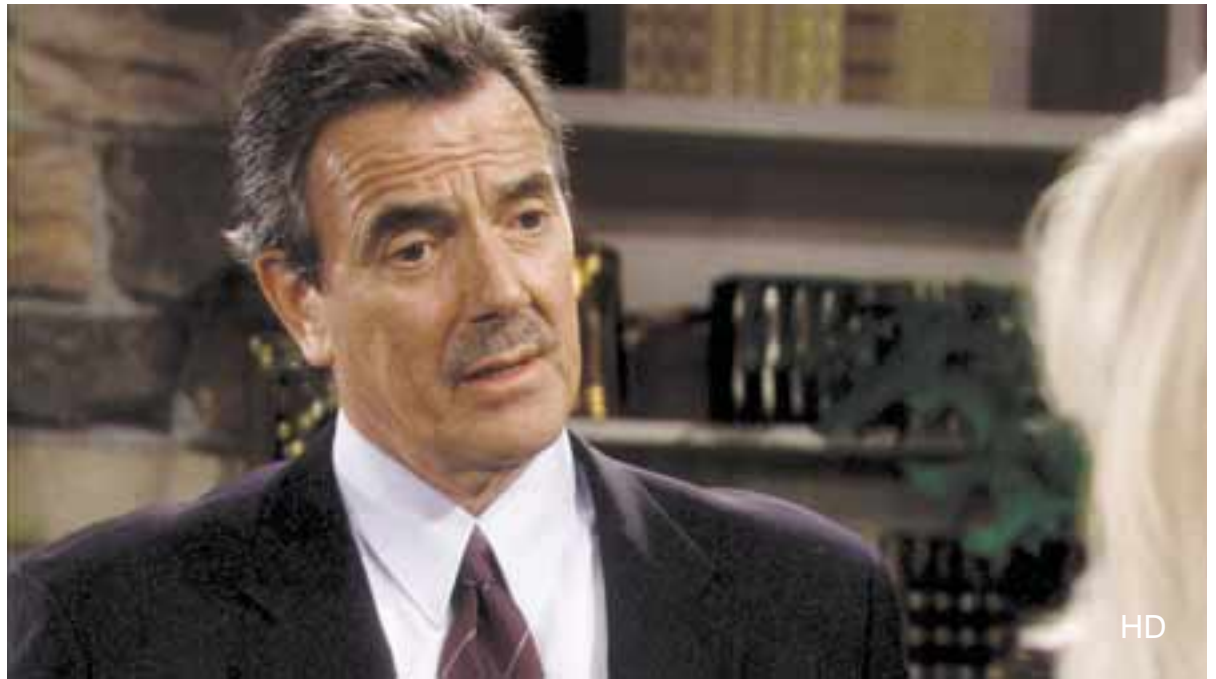
*Camryn Grimes plays Cassie Newman and Joshua Morrow plays Nick Newman*

to the actors," says Zegel. "We stress that more resolution is actually friendly to the face. The more resolution you have, the less false enhancement you have to use that can accentuate facial flaws. With HD, you get a more natural look."

"Everybody was worried that they were going to see every pore in the faces," agrees Scott. "But nothing's changed. It just looks better."

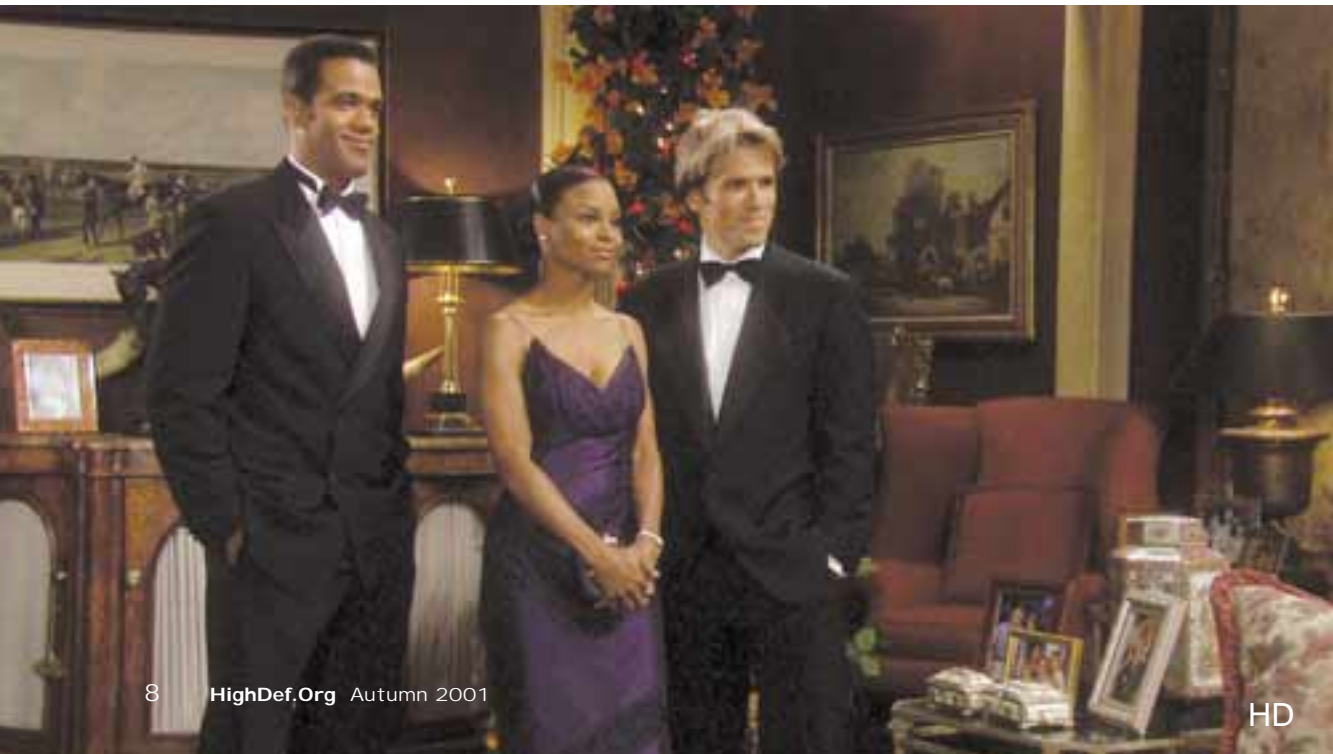
Aspect ratio presented more of an immediate challenge to the production team. Zegel stresses that shooting for both 16:9 and 4:3 can't be discounted...but "it's not a huge difference." "Especially in a daytime drama where so many of the shots are medium or tight shots," he points out. "On wide shots, the composition has to be watched more, but I think it was a learning curve that didn't take a long time."

The camera is equipped with a 16:9 viewfinder with 4:3 safety graticule, so the camera operators can readily recognize a safe shot. No surprise, the experienced camera crew quickly mastered the dual aspect ratios, says



Above: Eric Braeden plays Victor Newman

Left: From left to right, Kristoff St. John in the role of Neil Winters, Alexia Robinson as Alex Perez and Scott Reeves as Ryan McNeil



executive producer Scott. The bonus, for him, has been to see the show on a 16:9 monitor.

"I just love the look of it," he says. "It makes me feel like I'm doing a feature...it's so full and rich, like a movie."

Whereas the switch in production from NTSC to HD was easy, post production presented more challenges. "It was a pretty big deal in post," says supervising producer David Shaughnessy. "We still have to air in DigiBeta, but now we have to have an HD copy too. We had to come up with the easiest way to do that."

According to associate director/editor Marc Beruti, the footage recorded on D-5 is digitized at low resolu-

*Continued on page 10...*



# DIGITAL CINEMA LENSES

The Familiar Look and Feel of Cine...

...With a New World of Possibilities.

Digital Cinema is a reality and no one brings it to light quite like Fujinon.

When we introduced our full line of true HD Cine Style Prime and Zoom lenses, the industry was impressed. But when cinematographers try our lenses in production, they're simply blown away by the performance.

Nothing has been overlooked in achieving the familiar look and feel of cine. With markings for T-stops, cine-compatible gearing and other cine-style features, these robust lenses are playing

an important role in digital cinema production.

Fujinon's optics simply outperform other lenses. They have a subtle yet distinctly sharper look with richer saturation and a deeper depth of field. When shooting for a shallow depth of field, Fujinon Primes exhibit superb light transmission with the iris wide open while providing minimal port holing.

When you consider the new world of possibilities of Digital Cinema, there's only one choice to make . . .

Fujinon, because quality begins at the lens.

#### Prime Lenses

HAF5B-10 • HAF8B-10 • HAF12B-10 • HAF16B-10 • HAF20B-10 • HAF34B-10 • HAF40B-10 • HAF54B-10

#### Zoom Lenses

HA10x5B-10 • HA17x7.8B-10 • HA20x7.8B-10



Broadcast & Communications Products Division

FUJINON INC. 10 High Point Dr., Wayne NJ 07470-7434

Phone: (973) 633-5600, FAX: (973) 633-5216

FUJI PHOTO OPTICAL CO., LTD. 1-324 Uetake, Saitama City, Saitama 330-8624 Japan, Phone: 048-668-2152

[www.fujinon.com](http://www.fujinon.com)



PHOTO BY:

B. Sean Fairburn, SOC  
High Definition Cinematographer



Tracey E. Bregman plays Lauren Fenmore and Jeanne Cooper plays Katherine Chancellor

tion and then offlined in 16:9 on the NT-based Avid system, with the monitor masked to show both aspect ratios. For more efficient use of the HD online suite, the show is first onlined in NTSC and, after that's completed, the HD version is cut. But different equipment in the two suites means that it's not a simple auto-assembly for the HD cut. The NTSC online suite features an Abekas Dveous for effects and the HD suite utilizes the DME that comes with the Sony HD switcher. "We can't just take a floppy

out of the Dveous and pop it into the HD suite," says Zegel. Though cuts and dissolves transfer perfectly, other effects have to be rebuilt in the HD suite. "The production has become routine," says Zegel. "But we're certainly continuing to look at ways to streamline the process."

For the production team, from executive producer Scott to the actors and camera crew, enthusiasm for the HD look of *The Young and the Restless* couldn't be higher. In fact, as Beruti notes, they all look forward to the day

that they can cut the post work in half – and just produce *The Young and the Restless* in High Definition.

"Aside from the higher quality of the video, we see the show in 16:9 which opens it up so much more it puts you there," he concludes. "We wish we were all HD, because we like the look." ♦

# First Breath

by Valerie Gill

Composer, performer and adventure seeker, Paul Gilman, utilizes High Definition cameras to capture whales and dolphins in the waters of Hawaii, Canada and the Kingdom of Tonga.

Paul's belief in music as a universal language inspired him to travel to exotic locations to communicate through music with whales and dolphins. This resulted in 40 reels of topside and underwater High Definition footage and 50 reels of 3-chip footage.

Paul listened to the songs of the mammals with hydrophones and responded via keyboards through underwater speakers creating a musical dialogue. He also played a Native American flute from ocean kayaks and outriggers to which the mammals responded. After communication was established and the mammals were familiar with his sound, Paul physically entered their world, looked into their eyes and swam peacefully among pods.

Director of Photography, and underwater housing designer, Vince Pace, pushed the envelope of High Definition cameras, he used the Sony HD700A with Fujinon HA 10x5.2 ERD lens housed in his own Pace Mark V. Pace worked on the *Abyss*, *The Titanic* and numerous shows with Al Giddings. J. Roller, Richard Pyle and Steve Hogan also joined the underwater HD team. Paul is producing a mesmerizing show for broadcast featuring High Definition footage of whales and dolphins as they vocally and physically interact with him and his music. The show also features Paul's original compositions and 3-chip behind-the-scenes footage captured on a Sony DSR PD-100A by Videographer, Valerie Gill.

Aside from traditional television broadcasts, this



footage will be used to stage the *2001: Ocean Odyssey* tour. Audience members will be astounded by some of the most dramatic whale and dolphin footage ever captured in high definition. Including a ten-ton Orca surfing a boat wake right into the camera.

High Definition has already been successfully transferred to IMAX. The advantages of shooting wild animals with High Definition instead of IMAX is endless in terms of equipment handling and access to the mammals in their own wild habitats. Utilizing IMAX for aerials and

more predictable shots and High Definition for underwater and less predictable shots is a powerful combination Paul is exploring.

Although Paul has produced legends such as John Phillips, The Temptations, Leon Russell and scored feature films such as *Best of the Best*, and *Distant Justice*, sharing music as a universal language using high definition footage is by far the most beautiful and exciting. ♦

For more information on Paul Gilman's music, tours, projects or licensing footage, please visit [www.TheEyeoftheWhale.com](http://www.TheEyeoftheWhale.com)

# Suspended Animation

by David W. Thompson

**S**YNOPSIS: Shot on Sony's 24P HD, *Suspended Animation* is a full-length feature based on the riveting novel by Dorothy Tristan. In this edge-of-your seat suspense thriller, Thomas Kempton is a successful Hollywood animator. His hit movies are of the grand tradition of fairytales replete with evil witches, dark forests, and innocent victims. On a much-needed vacation, Tom takes a snowmobile trip with some pals to get away from his work for a while. The relaxing weekend takes an unexpected turn when he gets lost in the woods and finds himself in a real-life "grim" fairytale of his own. At the hands of psychotic sisters his nightmare begins. Barely escaping with his life, his unsettling brush with death leaves him obsessed by the experience and one of his captors. His twisted psychological journey on the dark side eventually leads him into the life of his captor's estranged daughter and her psychotic son. Trying to turn his bizarre experience into a hit animated feature only endangers him and his family by luring his captor back to her original prey.

HighDef.Org recently interviewed John Hancock at FilmAcres, his studio and home, located in LaPorte, Indiana.

**HighDef.Org: (HD)** What are the advantages and disadvantages of being located in Indiana instead of LA/Hollywood?

**John Hancock: (JH)** You get so much more for the dollar here – location fees are very cheap and salaries are smaller, you can put more up on the screen per dollar. I run my studio, FilmAcres, from my home. This is another advantage. My parents were in the fruit business here for 60 years. That's were the farm-oriented

name, FilmAcres, comes from.

**HD:** Your background has mainly been in film, having directed many features, who or what finally sold you on using electronic cinema, 24P HD, specifically, to shoot *Suspended Animation*?

**JH:** A couple of years ago at Cannes I saw the Sony demo. I followed that with a visit at Fletcher/Chicago and saw some of the same clips as well as additional footage and I just liked the quality of it. It worked out so well, the relief of not having to pay for the film up front and being able to shoot all you want is a big advantage for me, because I tend to shoot a lot. The people at Fletcher were helpful. Mainly it was just looking at the demos.

**HD:** I also understand that this was the first time that Misha Suslov, Director of Photography, shot with 24P HD?

**JH:** We both had certain trepidation about a new thing. It seemed to work out. Fletcher was helpful in showing Misha how to use the equipment.

**HD:** What was Misha's experience using the 24P HD camera?

**JH:** He'd do it again in a minute. I think he would rather do that than go back to film at this point. Misha liked the fact it took less time in lighting and how responsive it was at low light levels. He also likes the look of it... it's beautiful.

**HD:** What concerns did you have going in?

**JH:** Well, I was concerned, since we have a very physical picture with a lot of snowmobile mounts and working in the cold. We were concerned that the equipment would malfunction or fall apart from vibration. But

it proved to be quite rugged.

**HD:** What disadvantages, if any, did you experience while shooting in 24P HD?

**JH:** The monitoring system is still fairly elaborate and difficult to move around in the snow. But, you'd have that with video assist on film too. You just don't have to be cabled quite so much. You also don't get a good image through the eyepiece, yet.

**HD:** Would you say that the 24P HD format proved itself to you?

**JH:** Absolutely. By being able to see what you're actually getting, right away. And the cost savings out front is so big. To not have to worry about how much you're shooting is a big factor for me.

**HD:** What do you feel the future of electronic cinema is?

**JH:** I think it is going to take over the world, I really do. I think it has so many advantages.

**HD:** Do you plan on using 24p HD on future projects?

**JH:** Yes, absolutely. It is my preference.

**HD:** Will you use film again?

**JH:** I doubt it. I will use film only if someone insisted.

**HD:** Do you think you would be limited with 24P HD on certain projects versus film?

**JH:** I can't think of any.

**HD:** It sounds like you have been converted?

**JH:** Absolutely. You know a lot of things are not all they're cracked up to be, but this one is.

**HD:** Let's assume that some of your colleagues are



reading this article, what advice do you have for them?

**JH:** Don't be afraid of it. It's a tremendous new technology. If you tend to consume film this is the way to go.

**HD:** What are your plans, at this point, with *Suspended Animation*?

**JH:** I will be flying off to New York next week to work with Angelo Badalamenti who is doing the score, and we're going to do the sound post in Toronto, and then finish in Los Angeles and try to sell it to a studio. ♦

For more information on John Hancock's *Suspended Animation* please visit [www.suspended-animation.com](http://www.suspended-animation.com)



**JOHN HANCOCK**

Directing credits –

**FILMS:**

- Bang the Drum Slowly*
- Weeds*
- Prancer*
- A Piece of Eden*
- Let's Scare Jessica to Death*
- Steal the Sky*
- Baby Blue Marine*
- California Dreaming*

**TELEVISION:**

- Episodes of-
- Hill Street Blues*
- Twilight Zone*
- Cracker*
- Cover Up*

**COMMERCIALS:**

400+ Kmart ads

**ALSO:**

- Off-Broadway Director
- Artistic Director
- Stage Director

# Fashioning a *New Suit* in 24P HD

by M. David Mullen

In the early spring of 2001, I invited *New Suit* director Francois Velle to a digitally projected screening of *Jackpot*, a feature I shot in 24P HD for Michael & Mark Polish. Not only was he pleased with the film-like qualities of the image, but he was intrigued by the fact that *Jackpot* was composed for a 2.35:1 widescreen presentation (achieved by cropping the 16:9 HD frame). Shooting *New Suit* in a similar manner, we used a Sony HDW-F900 with the Canon 5.5-50mm and the Fujinon 7.5-150mm HD zoom lenses, all supplied by Bexel Video.

On *Jackpot*, I had turned off the camcorder's artificial sharpening since excessive edge enhancement can be one of the uglier aspects of video imagery on a large screen. However, the final 35mm 'scope prints of *Jackpot* exhibited some occasional softness, sometimes due to the optical quality of the Hi-Def zoom lenses at wide apertures. So for *New Suit*, I took advantage of the camera's "detail" function, but used it at an extremely low level; this seemed to improve overall sharpness without making the image look too edge enhanced. I also decided to shoot *New Suit* without diffusion filters except for the close-ups, where I used a 1/2 Soft-FX (the lightest grade), only rarely jumping to a 1 Soft-FX. I also tried not to shoot below an f/2.8-f/4 split, and while this increased my depth-of-field compared to shooting wide-open, we used this deeper focus for comedic or dramatic effect when staging the actors.

Since *New Suit* is a comedy, the overall look of the project is rich and colorful, but not garish. Francois wanted the image to have the overall warm tones of a film like *Chinatown*, so we carefully pushed the art direction, costumes, and lighting in that direction. We will also be printing the final transfer to 35mm onto Vision Premier



print stock, which will keep the rich colors and blacks that one would see in digital projection or on a HighDef monitor.

During our 20-day production, because we were shooting tape instead of film, Francois discovered that he was able to get more takes of performances - we ended up shooting the equivalent of 250,000' of 35mm negative, when most low-budget features generally can only afford to shoot 100,000'. We also saved a little time due to the limited number of camera reloads, since each

**We have in the current 24P HD format something that delivers near-35mm quality but with unique capabilities that some filmmakers will find useful for certain projects, enough to outweigh any disadvantages.**

– M. David Mullen, Director of Photography



HDCAM tape holds 50 minutes at 24P.

In terms of lighting, the only consideration I make for shooting digitally is that video cameras do not handle overexposure well. Therefore, compared to shooting color negative film, more of my effort is spent controlling the brightest areas in the frame, from carefully choosing the tonality of costumes, furniture and walls, to darkening daytime windows using ND gels, to lowering the intensity of practical lamps with dimmers. However, since the Sony HDW-F900 has a sensitivity at 0 db that roughly

equates to that of a 320 ASA film stock, the light levels employed when shooting are very similar to that of a typical 35mm film production.

All-in-all, I'm very pleased with the quality that the 24P HD format can deliver; I hope future formats will solve some of the lingering differences between HighDef and 35mm, primarily in terms of resolution and exposure latitude. But for now, we have in the current 24P HD format something that delivers near-35mm quality but with unique capabilities that some filmmakers will

find useful for certain projects, enough to outweigh any disadvantages.

It's similar to traditional film but it also has a look that is special to itself, and most cinematographers will be happy to have this new option available to them when choosing the best way to shoot a movie. ◆

# Paradise for Predators: *The Sharks of Palau*

by Jody Helzer and Jean Horton Garner

Over 340 isles scattered across the transparent blue waters of the South China Sea lured us into a web of visual delights. Thomas Horton Associates sent a compact crew to this oasis: John McKenney - DP, Clint Hemsall - 2nd camera, and Jody Helzer - Director. We were prepared to face unlimited numbers of many shark species in our three-week quest to be among the first to film sharks on HDTV.

A Mecca for filmmakers drawn to its abundant flora and fauna, the Republic of Palau still lacks certain basic tourist facilities. Yet its lush beauty and charming people are as alluring as any South Sea hideaway.

Once the 30 cases of equipment were unloaded, the dependable folks at Sam's Tours took us to all the right spots to find sharks. The planets were aligned in our favor -- we just missed a typhoon that had pummeled Palau for weeks, ensuring perfect weather for the entire trip.

We experimented with attracting sharks through using bait. Reactions were raw and powerful as very frustrated grey reef sharks, in their frenzy to find the bait, chased the cameramen and guides. Luckily, no one got hurt.

Palau struggles with how to regulate the commercial fishing industry. Foreign long-line fishing boats are taking a toll, lining the pockets of the boat owners, but with little benefit to the economy. Most fishing boats here are packed with shark fins. Thus we were not surprised that we never spotted tiger sharks, hammerheads or threshers.

Wildlife filming underwater is not easy – the animals may never appear at depths humans can withstand,



© Discovery Communications, Inc.

or they may leave before you're finished filming, and there are no tracks to follow. The mixture of gorgeous HDTV images, the variety and abundance of underwater life, and the glorious Palauan landscape combine to make a breathtaking film that will awe viewers for years.

The world premiere was Thursday, August 16th during Discovery Channel's *Shark Week*. ♦

*Produced 2001 by Thomas Horton Associates, Inc. for Discovery Channel. Written by: Jody Helzer (Director) and Jean Horton Garner (Co-Producer).*



© Discovery Communications, Inc.

# Iwerks® Creates Daytona HD Experience

by Christina Frueh

Iwerks Entertainment Inc. a leading provider of special venue theaters, announced the signing of a contract to provide an Iwerks TurboRide® simulation theater and custom film production for DAYTONA USA, the award-winning, official attraction of NASCAR at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Florida. The 32-seat, high-tech theater features the Iwerks TurboRide® 8-seat electric motion base, state-of-the-art High Definition video projection, and an action-packed, four-minute film, *Daytona Dream Laps*, which was shot on location at the Daytona 500 racetrack. It opened this summer.

"We're proud of our continuing relationship with DAYTONA USA and delighted to have the opportunity to entertain family audiences. People of all ages will be able to enjoy the sensation of winning the Daytona 500, in this attraction," says Don Iwerks, Chairman and Co-founder of Iwerks Entertainment.

Following a pre-show orientation, guests settle into their motion base seats for the live-action film, *Daytona Dream Laps* projected in HD, which will take them racing four times around the Daytona 500 racetrack, competing against the vehicles of celebrity Winston Cup racers. The 35mm film was shot on location, on the Daytona 500 track. Executive producer on the project was Iwerks' Doug Yellin.

Doug Yellin describes himself as an "old tried and true film guy." The experience of having 35mm film transferred to High Definition



for editing and presentation, "could not have been better", according to Yellin. He utilized American Production Service in Los Angeles for editing on this project. "I could not have had a better experience. I was a novice going in, was given guidance along the way, and the results were perfect", Yellin added. ♦



## Crazy Jones

by Joe Aaron

In May 2000 aspiring filmmaker Joe Aaron was "downsized." One year later, he successfully wrote, produced, and directed his first feature film. His story, *Crazy Jones*, is about a depressed, semi-suicidal 40 year-old man with Tourette syndrome. "He has nothing to live for," Aaron says - "then he meets a green-haired, 12 year-old girl named Syd who literally gives him a reason to go on."

Getting started was the hardest part. "The smartest thing I did was, I made sure I was the dumbest person on the set," Aaron jokes. Though funds were limited he was able to attract top people like Keith Coene, producer

and Brian J. Reynolds, director of photography.

Coene has produced several shoots including a 24P feature. "I gave him the script and the budget and said: 'Go!'" Aaron says. "And he did!"

Reynolds, a network television and studio film veteran of many years, gave the film its distinctive look. "Brian was able to make it more beautiful than I had imagined," Aaron says, "and we still got it in the can in 12-ten hour days!"

Ironically, the film is not a film at all. *Crazy Jones* is one of the first features to be shot on the brand new 24P High Definition technology. On this videotape the lines

of resolution are so fine that the images are nearly photo quality. Also of note, the video itself runs at 24 frames per second. This is important because traditional films run at 24 frames per second - this means no frames are dropped in the video to film transfer.

Reynolds was experienced in the 24P format (few cinematographers are) and he was ambitious in pushing the format to the max. Even if you've seen 24P projected, it's possible you've not seen all it's capable of. "Just come see *Crazy Jones*," Aaron plugs, "you'll see what this format can do!" ♦

# Investigative Reports with Bill Kurtis: *Druglord*

by Jon Siskel

In this one-hour, special episode of *Investigative Reports*, anchor Bill Kurtis travels to Southeast Asia to meet a reforming druglord in Myanmar (formerly Burma), and on to Thailand where Kurtis and his crew patrol border territory with U.S. DEA agents and the Thai military. Traveling on to China, Kurtis takes a look at new drug rehabilitation programs, for an insider's view of how the Chinese deal with their drug addicts. Back in the United States, IR looks at the results of Asian drug trafficking, following a young American heroin addict who lives on the streets and uses money from prostitution to buy her drugs. This program presents a rare look into the Asian sector of the international drug world never before seen by Western journalists. Many questions are posed that may provoke an answer to the worldwide drug problem.

The Golden Triangle is the geographical center for opium cultivation and heroin production in Southeast Asia. Its borders are defined by three countries: Laos, Thailand and Myanmar. Bill Kurtis and *Investigative Reports* gain access to this remote part of the world at the invitation of one man, Chairman Bao, the leader of the United Wa State in northeastern Myanmar.

Chairman Bao commands an army of some 20,000 soldiers and controls the second largest opium producing area in the world. His neighbors, China and Thailand, accuse him of running his Wa territory as one large drug operation. The United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) believes the Wa State provides most of Southeast Asia's opium – which in turn becomes twenty percent of the world supply.

Few people have visited Chairman Bao and the Wa State, and only a handful of select officials have visited



his base in Bangsan. With this documentary, Bill Kurtis becomes the first American journalist to enter the stronghold of Chairman Bao to conduct an exclusive interview.

Chairman Bao tells *Investigative Reports* a remarkable story -- how he is systematically destroying his drug crops. Chairman Bao has set out a 5-year plan to get rid

of opium and replace it with alternative crops and an alternative economy. In a behind-the-scenes conversation and private tour of his territory, Chairman Bao shows IR the current opium crop and the new alternatives. ◆

# Nonfiction Spots Pioneers 24P Ad Campaign

by William Conner

Ford's *Blue Oval* spot campaign, produced by Nonfiction Spots in Santa Monica, California, is the advertising industry's first national spot campaign shot in the 24P HD format. Directed by Peter Gilbert, Sundance and DGA Award winning documentary filmmaker (*HoopDreams*, *Vietnam*, *Long Time Coming*), the commercials have the unmistakable look of high end spots shot on 35mm.

Gilbert used Sony's CineAlta 24P HD camera, capturing images on tape in a way that mirrors film. He wanted a traditional yet stylized 35mm look, and planned on shooting a lot of footage. "When you're working with real people, you want to give them all the time they need to get comfortable," he said. "I wanted the latitude to take my time working with each real person in order to capture just the right moment that would work in a 30 second spot." The camera was provided by Fletcher Chicago along with accessories including a prime lens package.

Executive Producer Michael Degan also saw the advantage of the lower stock costs while filming. Once an interview had been set up, the camera could just roll unlike the normal stops and starts you would have with 35mm. One time when a person being interviewed saw that the camera was on, he began to get nervous. The director said "cut" and the interviewee relaxed. What he didn't know was that the camera was still running because of an agreement made prior between director and camera operator. "Cut" in 24P has now taken on a new meaning.

The budget for the spots was less than if it had been shot in 35mm, and more footage could be gathered because of the lower stock costs. "24P isn't going to replace film," says Gilbert. "It's just another tool, and this is just



the start of its use. You're going to see a lot more of 24P filmmaking in both features and commercials."

"We knew Ford would embrace this technology. And it was a perfect fit for this particular project," said J. Walter Thompson ad agency producer Kelly Trudell. "We shot an earlier test using 24P and I was impressed with the results. There was no question we were going to stick with it when the *Blue Oval Certified* project came up."

Gilbert worked with Director of Photography Mayrse Alberti who has an extensive background shooting commercials and feature films. Her recent films include Stanley Tucci's *Joe Gould's Secret*; and the recently completed principal photography on Richard Linklater's upcoming film, *Tape*, starring Uma Thurman and Ethan Hawk. "Maryse really embraced the technology," Gilbert

said. "Her lighting and camera work were key to keeping the spots in the film world."

Loretta Jeneski, Executive Producer for Nonfiction Spots, described the post experience as simple and painless. The spots were offlined on an Avid. Because much of the color correction was done in the field, only a slight bit of work was required after online. Post was done at Griot Editorial in Detroit, a division of Postique. Griot worked in D5 and downconverted to Digital Betacam for broadcast. For NAB, Sony edited another version of the spots in HDCAM at the Sony High Def Center in Culver City, California.

The reaction to the spots has been positive all around. In fact, according to Jeneski, nobody has noticed that the spots were not done in film. ♦



HD



## The New Easter Bunny

by Bill Dugan

Our Australian honorary correspondent, Larry Zetlin has completed another HD documentary down under. This one's called *The Men Who Killed the Easter Bunny*. Although the title sounds cruel, the real story is about a desert-dwelling bandicoot with huge furry ears and long tails called a bilby. The animal is endangered in Australia, threatened by feral foxes and cats. Cattle destroy their natural habitat and rabbits compete with them for food.

The documentary covers the efforts of two men, Peter McRae and Frank Manthey, two passionate envi-

ronmentalists who believe that the Easter Bunny should be replaced by Bilbies. They both work at the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Centre in Charleville.

The documentary, produced by Gulliver Film Productions, was shot in HD 1080i. The director is Jim Stevens, writer Pam Rushby and cinematographer Peter Nearhos. The bilby film will be distributed by Beckmann International, UK. ♦



# Leader... Anytime, Anyplace, Anywhere

**HDTV**  
TEST SOLUTIONS

- ABC • ATT/TCI • Belo • Bexel
- CBS • Crawford Comm.
- Ethnic B'cast'g • DaVinci
- Foto-Kem • HBO • HD-Vision
- Laser Pacific • Lighthouse Digital
- Limen Video Rental • MSG
- MCI • Museum Of Natural History
- NASDAQ • NBC • National Mobile Trucks
- N-Vision • Pacific Video • PESA
- Philips Digital • Quvis • Sony Pictures (HD)
- Synergistic • Tapehouse Editorial
- Texas Video & Post • Thomcast
- TXCN • Universal Studios • UPN
- Utah Scientific • Viacom • Walt Disney
- Warner Bros. • WBNS • WFAA • WRAL

www.LeaderUSA.com  
e-mail: sales@LeaderUSA.com

**LEADER**

FOR PROFESSIONALS WHO KNOW  
THE DIFFERENCE

6484 Commerce Drive, Cypress, CA 90630 Tel: (714) 527-9300 Fax: (714) 527-7490  
Regional Offices: Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York

**1 (800) 645-5104**

Photography Locations Courtesy of American Broadcasting Company

## Shoot & Online your 24P HD Feature for \$45,500 this special offer includes:

### 1. PRODUCTION

#### 3 week rental HDW-F900 Package from Bexel

- Sony CineAlta 24P camcorder
- HD zoom lens
- Preston micro-force zoom
- 4x5.65 two stage matte box
- Cine head (OConnor or Sachtler)
- Extension eye-piece
- Tripod
- Dual sided follow focus (Arri or Chroziel)
- AC/DC field monitor
- Batteries, charger and A/C

\*Note: Prices apply only to this offer and are not directly transferable to other deals. Wide zoom and prime lenses available at additional cost.

### 2. ONLINE

#### Finish a 90 minute 24P feature at APS

- 30 fifty minute reels of HDCAM shooting stock
- 30 Betacam SP downconverts from 24P
- Offline consulting services
- Mastering stock in 24P
- Downconverted Digital Betacam Master from HDCAM
- Auto-assembly of show 16hrs. in HDCAM 24P
- Color Correction 24hrs. in 24P
- Titling with credits 6 hours in 24P
- Audio layback stereo and Dolby E 5.1 (4 hrs.)
- Audio sweetening not included

\*Note: Some restrictions apply

